

Aerial view of a commercial site with nearly 100 percent imperviousness.

What are the projected SWM utility rates and billing process?

The SWM utility fees will be based on the impervious area found on a typical house lot in Rockville. Although Rockville house lots range in size from less than a tenth of an acre to over three-quarters of an acre, their impervious area varies only slightly. Because the amount of impervious area does not vary in size dramatically, all houses will be billed at the same rate.

The single family house fee is estimated to be about \$56 (\$4.65 per month) for the first year. By the seventh year, the fee is predicted to cost about \$90 (\$7.50 per month). The rate may be adjusted by the Mayor and Council each year to reflect cur-

rent financial projections.

The fee for office, retail, institutional, and multi-family properties would also be based on the amount of impervious surface on the property. This fee would be a multiple of the residential rate of \$56 in the first year, and is proportionate to the site's impervious area compared to a typical residential lot.

The City's Stormwater utility as proposed would be collected as a fee on the annual property tax bill sent each July. This billing system has been used by Montgomery County since 2002 for its SWM utility fee, known as the Water Quality Protection Charge.

All property owners, including the City government, would receive this bill for their share of the SWM program costs. The City will discuss billing options with townhouse and condominium communities for their common parking lots or other impervious areas.

What if I need more information?

For more information on the SWM utility program, visit the City's website at www.rockvillemd.gov or contact Lise Soukup, Civil Engineer II, Department of Public Works at 240-314-8515.

factoid...

The City has completed over 4 miles of streambank restoration.

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Aerial view of residential lots. Shaded blue area indicates the impervious footprint of one lot.



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Water, Water, Everywhere...

Answers to your
Stormwater
Management
Questions



City of Rockville
Department of Public Works
Divisions of Engineering
and Environment

What is stormwater? Why does it matter to Rockville? How can we keep the City's streams healthy? Who should manage stormwater and drainage problems?

The City of Rockville has been answering these questions for almost 30 years. Rockville started Maryland's first stormwater management (SWM) program to reduce stream erosion in 1978. The City added water quality treatment requirements in 1983. Since then, the City has built over 100 public SWM facilities, approved 400 private SWM facilities, and restored over four miles of stream bank. The City also operates almost 100 miles of storm drain pipes that take rain runoff from streets and parking lots to streams. It's a big job — and an important one to our residents and businesses, our wildlife, and the Chesapeake Bay.

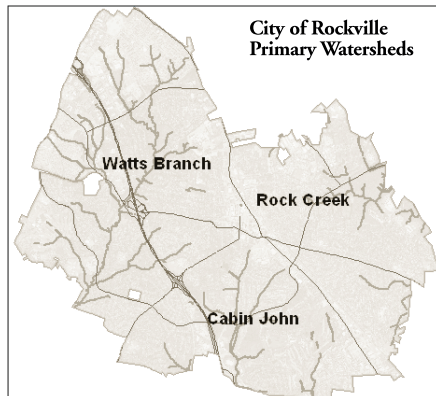
factoid...

The City has built over 100 public SWM facilities.

What is SWM and why does it matter?

Stormwater is excess rain. If it doesn't soak into the ground or get used by trees and plants, it runs off into our storm drain pipes and streams. Stormwater carries pollutants such as chemicals, oils, fertilizers, pesticides, and sediment. The rushing runoff also causes stream bank erosion that dumps more sediment into our creeks — this hurts aquatic insects, fish, and animals that depend on the stream for their food and habitat. All of Rockville's streams eventually reach the Potomac River and flow into the Chesapeake Bay.

Impervious areas are rooftops, driveways, parking lots, roads and other paving that block rain from soaking into the ground. Research has found that watersheds with just 10 percent impervious area start to decline in water quality and biological diversity. When watersheds reach 25 percent impervious-



The City has three separate watersheds that drain into specific streams as shown above.

ousness they show signs of severe stream degradation and need remedial SWM and stream stabilization. Within Rockville's city limits, approximately 30 percent of the surface is impervious.

Why should we manage stormwater?

Rockville's Department of Public Works (DPW) manages the City's water resources. DPW designs, constructs, and inspects public SWM, storm drainage and stream restoration. It also makes sure that these features are provided in new developments. DPW also enforces sediment control practices to keep dirt from construction projects out of our streams. The Environmental Management Division works with the public to increase water resources awareness and pro-



Aerial view of impervious surface including roads, parking lots, residential structures and non-residential structures.

tection, enforces measures against illegal dumping or discharges to streams, and guides the City's own worksites for better environmental management.

The City's SWM Fund — funded by developers, interest income, and some grant money — has provided most of these services until now.

Why do we need to act now?

Most of our public SWM facilities and storm drains were built between 1960-1996. State SWM control standards changed drastically in 2001, making many of the City's SWM facilities outdated. Until now, fees from development generated enough income to cover operations, maintenance, and upgrades for SWM. This funding source is declining because large-scale development is slowing in Rockville. At the same time, the City has more SWM facilities and pipes to maintain than ever before.

In 2002, Rockville and many other communities began addressing federal National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit requirements to treat and monitor runoff that enters the storm drains and streams. This program is federally mandated but funding is up to local communities.

Our streams are living, dynamic systems. They continue to show erosion and water quality problems as they respond to 50 years of development, especially since many older neighborhoods were built without effective SWM measures. Our SWM infrastructure must be upgraded to meet today's standards and to fix old and new drainage prob-

factoid...

The City maintains almost 100 miles of storm drain pipes.



Top: Inspectors involved in the assessment of a SWM site and its operations. Bottom: Without good drainage, stormwater from a significant rainfall can cause flooding.



Top: Before a SWM facility is built. Bottom: Same site after a SWM facility has been introduced.

SWM utility fees will be used solely for stormwater management, storm drain, and water resources services. The utility will pay for the operations, maintenance, and some capital improvements of the City's public SWM and stream projects. The utility also will help solve drainage problems, prevent future

problems, and repair, maintain, and enhance storm drainage facilities. In addition, the utility will cover costs for watershed education and outreach, reduce illicit storm drain discharges, and improve the City's municipal practices that affect our streams.

The City has launched a public information program to explain the fundamentals of the utility to residents, businesses, and institutional property owners. The public information program is beginning now with the enabling legislation, and the first billing cycle is expected in 2008.

lems. All properties with impervious area, regardless of their location or size, have an impact on water resources — and the City needs everyone to take part in keeping them healthy.

What is the next step?

To ensure that the City has the resources to address our SWM needs, the Mayor and Council directed staff to begin implementing a SWM utility program and fee. Rockville's SWM program will be self-supporting, just like the City's water and sanitary sewer utilities.

factoid...

All of the City's streams flow to the Potomac River and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay.